

THIS IS YOUR PAPER!
VISIT, WRITE OR CALL
333 W. NORTH AVE.
MICHIGAN 5484

Labor Views

VOL. 1, NO. 19 Sept. 30, '46 ISSUED BY REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS LEAGUE

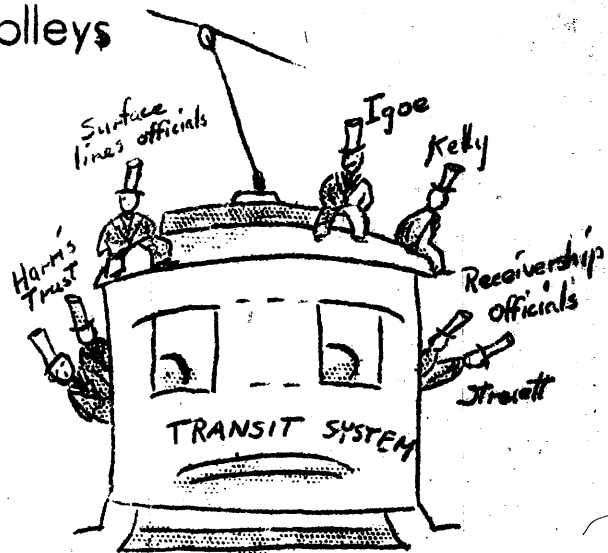
CHICAGO "RIDES THE RAILS"

City and Company Officials Grab Millions in Fees
Judge Igoe and Mayor Kelly Fight for This Juicy Plum
Workers Jammed Into Ancient Trolleys

When the Chicago Surface Lines introduced a few new cars on State St. a week ago or so the transit officials did everything but start them on their run with a bottle of champagne. Photographs of the new models appeared in the press. A few hours were given over to free rides. Realizing that Chicago's 3,600,000 inhabitants have the worlds worst transportation - the Surface Lines have only 85 cars out of 3,600 which are less than 20 years old, the L does not have a single car which is less than 24 years old - it is easy to understand this jubilation.



Chicago WORKERS



"SORRY BUD,
I'M ALL
FILLED UP!"

The L was placed in bankruptcy in 1937 after five years of receivership. The Surface Lines were placed in bankruptcy in Sept. of '44 after 18 years of receivership. In those years the receivership fees were \$900,000 for the L and \$4,000,000 for the Surface Lines. Now under bankruptcy the fees still remain full and fat, so attractive a source of plunder that Judge Michael Igoe in con-

trol has not the slightest desire to relinquish them.

Judge Igoe has had jurisdiction of Chicago's transit system - excluding Motor Coaches - since March 27, 1940. Court records reveal that he was given this jurisdiction by Judge Wilkerson who was then in control. This transfer was signed by the executive commit-

tee of the US District Court composed of the same Igoe and Wilkerson plus Judge Woodward. This judicial threesome knew what they wanted.

In December of '37, Truman then a US Senator from Missouri, had this to say about Wilkerson. "The most notorious receiver-

CHICAGO'S TRAMPLED TRANSIT...

(from page 1)

This distinction now goes to Igoe who controls over \$1,000,000,000 in bankruptcies or more than the other five District judges combined.

Upon declaring the Surface Lines in bankruptcy, Igoe set up a 5 man Joint Board of Management and Operation. Only one member had previous transit experience

and three others were former intimates of Igoe. A former law partner, Flaherty, was made general counsel of the Surface Lines at \$25,000 per year. John E. Sullivan, a close friend and former political associate, was chairman when the Surface Lines were put into bankruptcy and then became president. He refused to disclose his salary but the previous president, Chase, made \$50,000 a year.

The legal staff under the receivership consisted of 17 lawyers who were either friends of Igoe or friends of friends of Igoe. In '43 and '44 the transportation and maintenance workers on the Surface Lines decreased 10% because of the war but the office staff increased 25%. Despite the fact that the Surface Lines were in bankruptcy, in '45 there were 26 general officers with a joint annual income of \$363,328 or an average of \$13,973.

After the Surface Lines were placed in bankruptcy, Mayor Kelly and Governor Green took steps to have the transit system municipalized. Evidently too much gravy was being spilled on just Igoe's vest. On June 4 of 1945 this question was submitted to the Chicago people for a vote and a proportion of 40-1 approved the act.

The Metropolitan Transit Authority was then created consisting of 7 members who were appointed by Kelly and Green. The Chairman was to receive \$25,000 per year and the other members just \$15,000. A \$160,000,000 program was advanced which would modernize the transit system in 10 years but experts who have studied the program have concluded, that on the basis of how the funds will be disposed, 25

years would be an optimistic estimate.

But that the Governor, Mayor, Legislature, Federal Works Administration, Commerce Commission and the Chicago people had declared themselves in favor of municipal ownership did not mean Igoe would permit his rich perserve to slip out of his hands without a struggle.

June 11 of '45 the city franchise to the Surface Lines expired and the City Council refused to ratify a new one. The only obstacle for taking over the system was an agreement with the bondholders on selling price. The senior bondholders immediately accepted the plan but Igoe had a lawyer, Struett, representing a ridiculously small number of Junior bondholders, object. Struett stated that he could be influenced by a "firm offer" to the junior bondholders and if this was not forthcoming Judge Igoe "could protect the new company" from its lack of the city franchise "by way of injunction of mandamus".

The controversy between Kelly and Igoe continued into '46 and in the middle of February a liberal settlement was reached. \$75,000,000 was to be paid the Surface Lines' bondholders and they are to have \$18,000,000 of the assets of the municipal setup. \$12,000,000 goes to the L bondholders and \$3,000,000 of the new assets. This plan was submitted to the 40,000 bondholders and approved in May. Now the final (?) decision of the US District court of Appeals is awaited. Perhaps this winter all the legal barriers will have been surmounted and the city will take over the transit system.

But the people of Chicago are familiar with Kelly management. There is absolutely no reason to assume that this most corrupt machine which has used every situation to graft galore will treat the transit problem any differently. The Chicago transit system packs them tightest and gets them where they are going the slowest and most mauled. We cannot hope for very much of an improvement with Kelly playing conductor and Green motorman.

FROM TANKS TO TAXIS

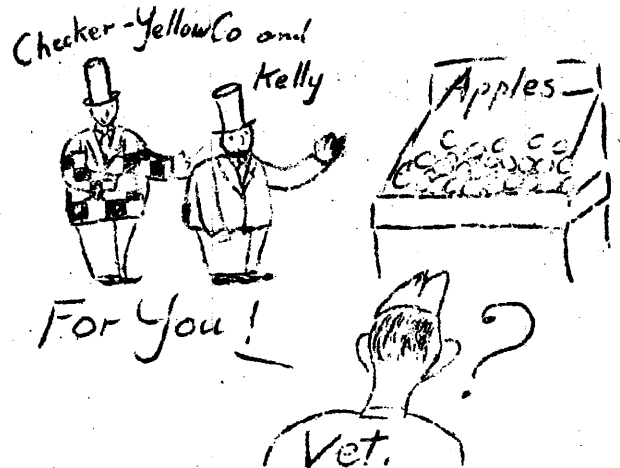
We have long felt that the vets in their fight for the right to drive cabs in Chicago were on the losing end of a sharp but fruitless struggle.

The following facts will help to explain why. Back in 1937 some of the Checker Cabs were still owned by individual drivers. Gradually this state of affairs was changed so that today the Yellow-Checker monopoly owns all the hacks driven by their drivers. This strengthened the cab monopoly immeasurably in dealing with the drivers. Later there was a merging of the companies. Perhaps in order to avoid anti-monopoly proceedings there was no attempt to identify the Yellow and Checker Cabs as a single company before the public. However, it is a well known fact that the Parmelee Transportation Co., a key unit in the taxicab empire, is the biggest stock holder of the Chicago Yellow Cab Co. Inc. They also control a large interest in Checker Cab.

The Yellow-Checker empire is a tight and smoothly functioning monopoly. In 1937 an agreement was worked out between Yellow and Checker in which Checker took 336 cabs off the streets, cutting its fleet to 1,164, and Yellow cut 155 of its cabs, leaving itself 1,495 in operation. Following the agreement the Parmelee Transportation Co. induced the Kelly machine (how much palm greasing it took to make Kelly agreeable is a closely guarded secret.) to pass a contract ordinance fixing a 3000 limit on cab licenses.

Not wishing to come into head-on collision with the rebellious vets the Kelly machine gave "verbal permits" to the vets hoping for a future more favorable situation in which to drive the vet cabs off the streets. The statements made recently by Joseph F. Grossman, assistant corporation counsel should make it clear that he is a stooge of the Chicago capitalist class including the Yellow-Checker monopoly. Grossman told the Yellow-Checker monopoly that the 495 additional licenses ordinance which was apparently passed for the vets will be issued primarily to the Yellow-Checker group.

Grossman hotly denied charges by the attorney for the Yellow Cab that the



Kelly machine intended to violate the ordinance giving the Yellow-Checker a virtual monopoly. He further accused the monopoly of "socking to control the powers of the chief executive of Chicago".

But the Yellow-Checker monopoly has even another card up its sleeve: it has been employing many veterans to drive its cabs and some of the older drivers are vets from the first world war. When a show-down comes, on who will actually get the new cab licenses (and this will be timed after the coming election) the city authorities will stand with the big companies in saying, "We can't discriminate against the veterans driving Yellow and Checker cabs!"

Vets should now see more clearly than ever that they are a political football being kicked around by the Yellow-Checker monopoly and their stooges, Mayor Kelly and J.F. Grossman, city corporation counsel.

Independent veteran cabbies are small businessmen. The day is past when the small businessman can successfully challenge the large titans of industry and their stooges - the city, state and national governments. Small businessmen are forced to fight the stranglehold of monopoly that envelopes them, but they can't win. Eventually if they are to move forward to a life free from the domination of a few capitalist princes they will have to join the working class in their concerted efforts to change the ownership of all productive property from the hands of private individuals to the hands of the working class as a whole.

WELL, WHAT THE "L" !!

"L" men's working conditions as bad as Chicago workers' riding conditions

Anyone who leafed through the Chicago Tribune on Sept. 16th, looking for Dick Tracy, (what else?) may have noticed a picture of the new train for future use in the subway. So what? One of the first things that pops into a "Gate Guard's" mind is that eventually he will be getting a smaller pay check. For, one of the improvements included is that fewer men are needed to run these new trains. One man can control the doors of two or maybe more trains and the so-called "extra" men will get in less hours per week.

But for now let us consider some of the problems of the present. Let us consider for instance a few of the working conditions of the motorman.

He sits in a cab which is stuffy and hot in the summer and cold and damp in the winter. It is strongly "requested" of him by the company that he wear at all times while on duty the regular uniform overalls - clean and starched. He can get away without obeying this rule for the present because there's a "labor

shortage". But he knows that in time the company will clamp down on this and all other rules when labor is back on its knees, begging for a job.

About the only thing to relieve the monotony of the motorman's job is the interesting "guess when" game. This consists of guessing whether the brakes will catch and hold at the next station or not.

It deserves a definite note of congratulations to these motormen for their feat of driving these wrecks for so many miles without more serious accidents than do occur. But congratulations are not enough to compensate for the ragged nerves of men who must work under such a strain.

The working conditions mentioned here are not helped any by another one of the "little" gripes of the conductors and motormen who run the trains. They don't get any regular lunch period. Ordinarily, the "lay-over" at the end of the line - that is, the time between trips - is about 10 minutes; it varies according to the different schedules - somewhere between 6 and 14 minutes. Once (or if the men are working a "good run", twice) in the course of his day he gets a "relay" of 18 to 25 minutes. This is his lunch period. Ever try to buy and eat a substantial lunch in 20 minutes?

When the griping becomes too strong the company retort is, "A railroad man's life is always rough". So they blow this Toonerville Trolley up to the size of a railroad. But when the workers ask for an improvement in their conditions at least up to the level of the large inter-city railroads, the answer is, "This isn't a railroad, it's a transit system!"

Well, one thing they know - railroad or transit system - this job stinks!



Labor Views IS GOING TO GET A NEW FACE
 Beginning with Labor Views No 20 it will be produced by the Multi-lith process...making it easier to read. So from now on...
 IT'S GOING TO COST MORE to produce. Your contributions welcome.

The Question Is, Gentlemen: HOW MUCH PROFIT CAN BE MADE? FROM THE STREET CARS, the Elevated SUBWAY BUSES

STREET CARS,
the Elevated
SUBWAY
BUSES

For the past generation more and more workers in Chicago have been jammed onto the same aging transportation. Almost the only changes made in the transit system have been periodic fare increases - resulting not in improved service to the public, but in bigger and better graft for the politicians and profits for the owner. Chicago's appalling transportation mess, however, will never be straightened out by a mere change to "honest" city administration. The hectic growth of our city transit system has followed the very pattern dictated by the interests of the big industrialists and merchants who have always controlled the development of Chicago.

In the days of the horse-drawn street-cars Chicago's new businessmen and the local politicians made a deal for all the cars to turn around at a certain corner - which corner would become a business center. This place where the cars turned around soon became known as the "loop". And this business area yielded millions in profits to a few merchant-princes.

Through the years of Chicago's mushroom growth these arrogant capitalists have fought any common sense impulse to route the city's transportation according to the people's need to move about the city efficiently and quickly. We are finally faced with a gigantic tangle of streetcars, streetcar-buses, buses, elevated trains, a small section of subway and some semi-suburban trains - all converging in the loop and glutting it, giving it a horrible case of community constipation every day in the week.

Workers traveling from the South Side to the North Side, those traveling from the West to the South Side, must inch their way through this loop.

Serious engineers and social scientists look at Chicago's transportation system and come to the conclusion that only after a complete re-planning of the community will it become efficient. The arbitrary concentration of the city's commerce, the



helter-skelter factories and warehouses - jammed and sprawled across endless blocks of rotting, neglected area, the cruel crowding of thousands of people in these places - no transportation system could efficiently serve this chaos.

Labor Views — is issued by the Revolutionary Workers League to further the struggle of the working class against the constant attack of the industrialists and bankers.

We propose independent working-class action beginning at the shops, mines and mills against this ruling-class and its government - its police forces, its courts and laws - operating as its "big stick".

LABOR VIEWS recognizes that although today the working class fights to defend its living standards, tomorrow it will face the task of abolishing this rotting system of capitalist slavery, and create a government which will organize society for the welfare of all wholabor. The chief instrument needed for achieving this goal is a Revolutionary Workers Party.

MORE ABOUT WORKING CONDITIONS IN LOCAL 288 SHOP

288 URWA-CIO PUBLISHES SECOND ISSUE OF SHOP PAPER

From the new local 288 URWA-CIO shop paper comes some new light on the deplorable conditions under which they work. Mr. Trilling, the owner of the plant, decided to make a concession to the workers last week: a ten minute rest period for the men. But they found out that when the weather gets cold they won't be able to smoke any place inside the plant.

"They've cancelled the factory's health and safety insurance!" cried Mr. Trilling.

Well, the workers of 288 doubt that Trilling could ever get insurance on this plant. With the most shamefully inad-

quate toilet and sanitary conditions, improper drainage, an unsafe boiler, broken floors and mills operating without safety switches, the place is a medieval dungeon.

Here is one pathetic picture of the conditions in this plant. When some of the forty women wish to change clothes they have one refuge: they duck behind a boiler into a coal bin!

Apparently unconcerned over this state of affairs management of this plant apparently has further plans to stop-up production. In the press room four men are now working on the same number of presses that six men used to manage. The now "extra" men have not been fired. But already some of the press room men have been asked if they will work on a proposed third shift. Stretching two shifts of men into three shifts is a good trick - only pulled when the workers are asleep.

OUR MISTAKE...

In the article reporting the negotiations between the Bingham Co. and Local 120 URWA-CIO, Labor Views stated that the workers at Bingham received two 15¢ an hour raises between December of 1945 and March of this year. This is wrong. Between those dates the workers received one 15¢ average raise in every job classification. This was done piecemeal in continuous negotiations.

BINGHAM WORKERS WIN CONTRACT

Bingham workers last week signed a new contract with Bingham getting 15¢ an hour on the average in each job classification.

YOU ARE
INVITED
to classes meeting
Wed. Eves. 8:15pm.
IN LABOR VIEWS
OFFICE 333 W. NORTH
AVE.
SUBJECT:
Beginning Oct. 2, four class-
THE FOUR INTERNATIONALS

They fought for this

SARGENTS SAYS OK TO UNION ELECTION But ~ Refuses to let Uets Vote

Here is a new slant on democracy as a factory owner sees it. Sargents Drug Manufacturing Company workers are trying to organize. The union involved is ILWU-CIO.

veterans who because they are going to school work only part time - about five hours a day. Their pay - 70 cents an hour.

The company has agreed to a union election if the veterans are excluded from the vote. Hail democracy - as a capitalist sees it!

The leading militants in the plant are